

Branch 2184 ... "Speaks"

Official Publication of Branch 2184, NALC, AFL-CIO

November/December 2009

Branch 2184 Western Wayne County, MI National Association of Letter Carriers AFL - CIO

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Office Hours:

9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday

Calendar Branch Meetings:

January 6th, 2010 February 3rd, 2010 7:30 p.m. - Union Hall

Retirees Meetings:

January 13th, 2010 February 10th, 2010 12:30 p.m. - Union Hall

In this issue:

Presidents Report	1-3
EVP Report	4
NRP Update	5
Customer Connect	6
Contract Corner	8
Calendar of Events	9
COLCPE	10
Scholarship Winners	11

President's Report

McGregory Selected For Leadership Academy!

The Branch has been notified by our National Office that Branch 2184 Sergeant At Arms, Wayne Steward and Wayne, Westland, and Canton Step A designee Walter McGregory has been selected for the ninth National Leadership Academy. The training will start in January and will be held at the National Labor College in Silver Springs Maryland, not far from Washington DC.

Former National President William Young created the Leadership Academy in 2005. The Academy agenda features rigorous classroom training supplemented by challenging individualized home projects. During the three week classroom training National Officers and staff members conduct class sessions in their field of expertise. The subjects range from the history of our Union, NALC legislative and political agendas, contract administration, as well as current and long-range issues facing our union. Communication skills, both verbal and written, are major components of the classroom training. The class sessions will be held for one week in January, one week in March and for one week in May. In between classroom sessions Walt will be working on an individualized project. His classroom instructors will review the project upon completion. Former national officers Jim Williams and Jim Korolowicz serve as lead academy facilitators and work with Director of Education Jamie Lumm.

During his breaks from classroom training and while he is working on his project Walt will be mentored by his home Branch officers. On behalf of the Branch and Officers I would like to congratulate Walt on being the first Branch member to be selected for the Leadership Academy. I am confident Walt will show the exceptional leadership skills the academy was looking for when they selected him and that he will represent the Branch in an outstanding fashion.



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Branch 2184 Speaks is published 6 times a year by Branch 2184, National Association of Letter Carriers.

The opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the editorial staff or the officers of the branch.

We invite all members to contribute articles for publication. Copy should be typed, double-spaced and signed by the contributor. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit, delete or reject the article for the good of the branch.

In the hope that material contained herein may be of benefit to the goals of the NALC, permission is hereby granted to copy or use material in this publication with our best wishes.

Stewards

Belleville Gregory Bodziak (alt) Dearborn (Main) Darryl Clay Jacqueline Wiggins Ed Williams (alt) Dearborn (Annex) Melvin MacDonald Roderick Lelental Tom Klecha (alt) Dearborn (Teleford) John Czuchrak Dearborn Heights Jim Hales James Wolstencroft Denise Viola (alt) Dundee Deborah Standifer Flat Rock Gloria Warthen Grosse Ile 313-295-1640 Inkster Bryon Hendricks Lincoln Park Scott Watts Dave Reise (alt) Monroe Erik Venzke Chris Carmon (alt) Northville Bridgette Sams Beth Maleszewski (alt) Jim Holland (alt) Plymouth Don Oziemski Dan Marek Bob Venning (alt) Patricia Linna (alt) Heather Childers (alt) Rockwood Gloria Warthen Grosse Ile 313-295-1640 Inkster Bryon Hendricks Lincoln Park Scott Watts Dave Reise (alt) Dove Reise (alt) Fris Carmon (alt) Rockwood Gloria Warthen Bob Venning (alt) Patricia Linna (alt) Heather Childers (alt) Gloria Warthen Taylor Bob Parisi Andrea Smith Michele Szafran (alt) Heather Childers (alt) Gloria Warthen Taylor Gwen Heffinger Casey Pennington Anthony Conley (alt) Wayne Walter McGregory Westland Joan Hicks Canton Dianne Daley Lois Fritz Kathy Hayes (alt) Ypsilanti Rick Rider Mike Treadway Alan Grajczyk (alt) Malcolm Muscato (alt)		
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Address Correction Requested

When you move, change your name, leave the letter carrier craft, retire, or your phone number changes, we need to hear from you. Your member benefits, newsletter and other mailings may be affected if we don't have the new information. It only takes a phone call or drop us a note. We will do the rest.

Call 313-295-1640

(Continued from page 1)

President's Report

Global Positioning Systems

Postal GPS devices have made their way into two offices represented by Branch 2184. We were informed (not by the USPS) that the devices were being installed in all the postal vehicles in the Lincoln Park office and the postal vehicles at the Dearborn Annex. I have sent letters to the respective postmasters asking for the vehicle numbers and the routes assigned to those vehicles. The Postmaster in Lincoln Park has complied with our request while we are still waiting for the list from the Postmaster in Dearborn. In the meantime I

have instructed the stewards at the Dearborn Annex and Lincoln Park to file class action grievances -

"to be forewarned is to be forearmed"

against the USPS for violating the national level agreement (M-01705) which required the USPS to notify the Union in advance of the installations and vehicles receiving GPS devices. I have also contacted our National Business Agent regarding the use of these devices and asked him to contact the National office for the latest on what the USPS can use from these tracking devices. The carriers in these two offices have also received the following service talk titled "GPS Technology in Today's Delivery Environment".

"The Postal Service is implementing Global Position Satellite (GPS) technology in delivery vehicles within the Detroit District. The devices will make it possible to easily locate and account for USPS vehicles. With this information, the Postal Service will be better able to determine and develop driving patterns and monitor driving habits. Understanding driving patterns can help the Postal Service reduce fuel consumption, improve work performance, and may assist in reducing or minimizing the potential for vehicle related accidents. Vehicle speeding, vehicle idling, park times and

route deviations are types of data the GPS system The information will be collected will collect. automatically, continually throughout the day, and transmitted to USPS management via email and end of day reports. This is another way the USPS is trying to stay competitive while still providing excellent service to our customers."

It is the position of the National that the GPS devices should be considered nothing more then a "management tool" and should not be the sole basis for any discipline resulting from the use of that tool. Until we can clarify what data will be collected and how it will be used, please continue to work in a professional manner. As the old saying goes "to be forewarned is to be forearmed".

Season Greetings

I would like to wish you and your families a happy holiday and a healthy and prosperous New Year!

--Mark Judd President



He's making a list and checking it twice. He's gonna find out who's naughty or nice.

EVP's Report

Don't Tread on Me

These words date back to the early days of American democracy. They were a rally cry that the first Americans used to oppose the British monarchy in their fight for freedom. Even today this phrase is still used in representing liberty and freedom. As for me, these words are how I feel when it comes to the Postal Service management.

As we all know, the USPS is in big financial trouble and there does not seem to be any indications that these troubles are going to go away soon. We hear of the billions of dollars lost, declining mail volumes and high labor costs despite millions of work hours being cut nationally. The USPS

cannot survive on the same path that it is currently on. So the Postmaster General figures

"So what happens after they adjust (remove) routes?

They do it again."

that things are so bad that we need to cut a day of delivery. This is the last thing the USPS needs. It just does not make any sense to take away revenue when you're saying there is not enough revenue.

Don't tread on me.

So the NALC enters into an agreement to adjust (remove) routes due to the declining volume. This is an attempt by the NALC to help the USPS through these hard times. So what happens after they adjust (remove) routes?

They do it again.

How many adjustments (reductions) do we endure until the routes are all 8 hours in the field! The NALC did do the right thing in making this interim agreement, because what do you think would happen if they did not? The USPS would have done it their way and if you don't like it, then grieve it. I wonder how backed up the grievance procedure would be and how long it would take to hear the thousands of grievances at arbitration. Meanwhile you are battling on a daily basis about why it takes

you 10 hours to do *their* 8 hour assignment. This process is supposed to take into consideration the carrier's input. So by all means give it to them.

Don't tread on me.

As a Union activist I receive the publication *NALC Activist* and always look at the USPS "By The Numbers Page". In the March 2009 issue there was a category "City Carriers per delivery supervisor" and the number was 16.9. This means that there were 16.9 carriers per 1 supervisor. In the July 2009 issue that same category fell to 15.8 carriers per supervisor. This shows that there are more supervisors to carriers as we move forward. If the USPS is serious about reducing work hours then it should start by reducing its supervisors work hours since after all, it's not necessary work.



Then there is the Office of Inspector General report dated January 20, 2009 with the Subject: Management Advisory- Imprudent Spending Using

NALC HEALTH BENEFIT PLAN PHONE NUMBERS

Main Office NALC HBP	1-703-729-4677
Customer Service	1-888-636-6252
7 days a week, 24	hours a day
24-hour Nurse Line	1-800-622-6252
Mental Health	1-877-468-1016
Substance Abuse	1-877-468-1016
PPO Locator Service	1-800-622-6252
Hospital Precertification	1-800-622-6252
Prescription Drug Program	1-800-933-6252

For additional information, visit the national website at www.nalc.org/depart/hbp

(Continued from page 4)

EVP Report

the SmartPay Purchase Card (Report Number FF-MA-09-002).

Conclusion

Management employees have made, and are continuing to make, imprudent and unnecessary purchases during a time of severe economic uncertainty in the Postal Service. While such purchases are generally not in direct violation of Postal Service policies, they conflict with the Postal Service's objective of driving down costs in all operations and processes. Moreover, the public's view of such imprudent purchases could have a detrimental effect on the Postal Service's public image due to the perception that the agency is using funds from sales of stamps to purchase expensive items.

Some examples of imprudent purchases are:

Electronic and household items such as GPS navigational systems (some carriers already received their GPS units), video game consoles, camcorders, HD TVs, designer watches, tickets to sporting events were given as awards/recognition.

This report is very enlightening to me beit tells me that some individuals cause (management) are not pulling their own when it comes to saving the Postal Service from itself. That is the battle that we are in for when it comes to saving the Postal Service we have to save it from the ones who are running the place. Always do your best to get the job done and put yourself above the individuals who are trying to destroy the greatest mail delivery system in the world. So I would hope that when management asks you why you are not doing your job your response will be, DON'T TREAD ON ME!

As we get ready for what should be a very interesting 2010, I would like to wish all a safe and joyous holiday season. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

-- Jim Wolstencroft Executive Vice President

UPDATE ON THE NRP

(NATIONAL REASSESSMENT PROCESS) A Continued Attack on Injured Letter Carriers

The USPS National Reassessment Process (NRP) involving employees with job-related injuries began in 2007, but it is within the past 16 months that its effects have been manifested upon Branch 2184's members. A short definition of the NRP is that it represents a wholesale and intentional disregard by the USPS of their existing contractual and legal obligation to make "every effort" to find suitable work for injured employees.

The NRP has been implemented nationally in two phases. In the Detroit District, the initial phase ("Phase 1") primarily involved data collection, medical updates, new job offers, and also the reassignment of some Branch 2184-represented letter carriers who have been medically determined to have reached "maximum medical improvement" (MMI) from their job-related injuries. Several of these reassignments were to the USPS Customer Care Center (the "Call Center") in Detroit, where they are working while still represented by Branch 2184. One of these NRP reassignments resulted in a grievance which is pending arbitration.

NRP "Phase 2" has thus far been even more problematic for our injured members as well as for Branch 2184' s officers and stewards. As noted above, management has abandoned their obligation to make every effort to find suitable work for injured employees. On a day to day basis, they are arbitrarily withdrawing available work and sending the injured employees home.

In most instances the injured employee is provided with a written job offer, which typically fails to include numerous available duties that the injured employee is capable of performing within his or her medical restrictions. Management's excuse is that some of this work is allegedly "not productive" or "not necessary." However, their contractual and legal obligation to make "every effort" (Continued from page 5)

Injury Compensation

to find work does not allow them an arbitrary determination of alleged productivity or necessity as a determining factor. Of note, injured letter carriers are entitled to union representation when receiving NRP-related job offers. Either Branch 2184 President Mark Judd or I have been providing this representation and we will continue to do so.

Our stewards have a particularly difficult task investigating and developing grievances in response to management's withdrawal of work for injured letter carriers. Specific evidence of available duties which were not offered to the injured employee at the same time he or she was sent home must be provided for each day that this occurs. Your stewards have received training on this issue from the Branch 2184 office and have been provided with a packet of documents to assist with their task. However, this is difficult and tedious work. Branch President Mark Judd has assigned me to act as his formal Step A designee for all NRPrelated grievances. As of this date, one "withdrawal of work" NRP grievance from Branch 2184 has already been approved for arbitration.

Finally, for those who think that the ongoing NRP debacle does not concern you because you have been fortunate enough to avoid incurring a significant job-related injury, you should carefully

The Weingarten Declaration

"If the discussion I am being asked to enter could in any way lead to my discipline or termination or impact my personal working conditions, I ask that a union steward, representative or officer be present. Unless I have representation I respectfully choose not to participate in this discussion."

Keep in mind if you do not **REQUEST UNION REPRESENTATION**, then you are considered to have waived this valuable right.

(Clip and keep with you while working)

reconsider your position. No letter carrier, no matter how attentively and safely you perform your job, is free from the risk of a job-related injury. The nature of letter carrier work is such that more letter carriers are injured on the job than any other USPS craft - or any other Federal agency. Moreover, management's attack on the rights of your injured coworkers could just as easily be an attack on your rights.

Are you ready?

--Joe Golonka
Branch 2184 Injury Compensation Specialist



Customer Connect

Congratulation to the following Branch 2184 carriers who turned in customer connect leads which turned into sales.

Deborah Canfield (Westland) - \$2,000.00
Timothy Bowsher (Ypsilanti) - \$2,000.00
Maryann Mullahy (Dearborn Annex) - \$500.00
Michele Sharkey (Dearborn Main) -\$13,000.00
Elizabeth Bok (Ypsilanti) - \$5,000.00
Jack Lupro (Taylor) - \$25,000.00
Cynthia Gibson (Plymouth) - \$10,000.00
Bridgette Sams (Northville) - \$4,400.00
Deborah Hoover (Canton) \$5,000.00

Through Customer Connect, letter carriers are taking advantage of their special relationships to encourage business customers to use USPS instead of private delivery services. Since the startup in mid-2003, letter carriers have generated more than \$803 million in new revenue.

Branch 2184 Web Site

Visit our web site for:

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www.nalc2184.org

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Contact Your Brookfield Representative! Robert Kreager

Branch 2184 Retired

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Contract Corner:

Q: I am a PTF carrier and I bid on a vacation hold down. The schedule of the route is from 7:30 to 4:00 but management told me to come in on a Friday at 12:30 and they had another carrier do the route. It was not the regularly scheduled day off for that route. Wasn't I guaranteed the right to do the route?

Yes, under the circumstances described above you were entitled to perform the duties and work the schedule of the hold down (opted) assignment and cannot be displaced from it. This guarantee is defined by provisions of Article 41, sections 2.B.3, 4, and 5 of our Contract, and applies except in the rare instance of their not being enough work for a full time regular carrier. Since this was a Friday, it appears that management was deviously attempting to limit your total work hours and their overtime liability for that week by improperly removing you from your hold down. However, they may not do so in order to avoid the payment of overtime. Whenever this occurs, the affected employee(s) should immediately request to see their Steward. The Joint Contract Administration Manual (JCAM) defines the remedy for such violations of the Contract as payment to the affected employee for all hours that they were denied the schedule of the opted for (hold down) assignment.

Q: A clerk was excessed to my unit as a regular. I am a PTF with 3 years of craft seniority, will he have more seniority than me?

The answer is no. Clerks, Mailhandlers and A: others that are excessed into the letter carrier craft always start a new period of craft seniority. Although the excessed clerk will remain a fulltime regular, he will be placed at the very bottom of the carrier seniority list. JCAM Articles 12.5.B.10 and 41.2.G are clear.

Article 12.5.B.10. This language requires that the craft article seniority provisions determine the seniority of employees excessed from one craft to another. Under the provisions of Article 41.2.G employees from another craft excessed into the letter carrier craft begin a new period of seniority. They will be junior to all current part-time flexibles, and not just one day junior to the junior full-time regular.

Article 41.2.G An employee from another Postal Service craft who is transferred, either voluntarily or involuntarily, to the letter carrier craft will begin a new period of seniority - except when the assignment qualifies under the provisions of Article 13.6.A., pertaining to cross-craft reassignments of employees for the purpose of assuming light-duty assignments.

Q: I am a PTF and some TE's in my office are scheduled to work when I am not. What are my rights as a PTF?

A: Article 7.1.B.3 obligates management to give part-time flexibles working at the straight-time rate a priority in scheduling over TE employees. This priority is not absolute: The employer's obligation may be fulfilled over the course of a "service week," and the part-time flexible employees must be "qualified and available." (A "service week" begins at 12:01 a.m. Saturday and ends at 12:00 midnight the following Friday. See Article 8.2.A.)

Service Week. A successful grievance on this issue must show that management scheduled a TE for work which a PTF carrier could have performed instead, and that the PTF carrier worked less than 40 straight-time hours during the service week. Because the contract language addresses the service week rather than any specific day's assignment, management does not necessarily violate the con-

tract by, for instance, using a TE on a Monday while PTF's are unscheduled. A violation occurs when that assignment causes a PTF who could have performed the Monday work to lose straight-time work hours during the service week.



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Calendar of Events

Christmas December 25th
New Year Holiday January 1st
MLK Holiday January 18th
Presidents Day February 15th
Branch Meeting January 6th at 7:30
Branch Meeting February 3rd at 7:30
Branch Meeting March 3rd at 7:30
Retirees Meeting January 13th at 12:30
Retirees Meeting February 10th at 12:30
Retirees Meeting March 10th at 12:30
Steward Meeting January 5th at 7:30
Steward Meeting January 11th at 7:30
Steward Meeting February 9th at 7:30
Steward Meeting February 22nd at 7:30
Executive Board January 25th at 7:30
Executive Board February 22nd at 7:00





2009 COLCPE Contributors

Belleville

- ✓ Gregory Bodziak
 - **✓** Bruce Prevost

Dearborn Main

- ➤ Darryl Clay Robert Panchenko
- ✓ Daniel Smith Jackie Wiggins
- ✓ Ed Williams

Dearborn Annex

- Nancy Altman
- ✓ Timothy Bailey
- ✓ Michael Bergin
 - ✓ John Dainus
- ✓ Mark Judd Thomas Klecha
- **✔** Roderick Lelental
- ✓ Melvin MacDonald
- ✓ Carol Macieczni Darrin Mifsud*** Rosemary Miller
- ✓ Karen Regentik Jerry Taylor Scott Wandyg

Dearborn Teleford

- John Czuchrak***

 James Likeric***
- ✓ Alan Swinteck

Dearborn Heights

- ✓ Roger Corpolongo
 - ✓ Jim Hales
 - ✓ Denise Viola
- ✓ James Wolstencroft

Flat Rock

✓ Amy Degrand

Grosse Isle

✓ Kimberly Bumbul

✓ John Nellis

Inkster

Thad Dillard***

- ✓ Bryon Hendricks
- ✓ Roy McMahan

Lincoln Park

- Dave Reise
- **✓** Paula Hall
- **✓** Scott Watts

Monroe

- **✓** Chris Carmon
- ✓ Kenneth Masserant
 - ✔ Erik Venzke

Northville

James Holland Elizabeth Karsten

✓ Beth Maliszewski

Plymouth

- ✓ Heather Childers
- ✓ James Crossey
- ✓ Patricia Linna
- ✓ Gary Macioce
- ✓ Dan Marek Don Oziemski

Rockwood

✓ Gloria Warthen

Taylor

- ✓ Carol Clark
- **✓** Bob Parisi
- ✓ Andrea Smith
- ✓ Michele Szafran

Temperance

✓ Kari Guthrie

Trenton

✓ Anthony Conley

- ✓ Dennis Lucas
- **✓** Casey Pennington

<u>Wayne</u>

- ✓ Walter McGregory
 - ✓ Edward Sikora

Westland

- ✓ Wenoia Clark
- ✓ Ted Gagnon
- ✓ Joan Hicks
- Aaronette Howell***
 - ✓ Katrina Jones
 - ✓ Raymond Tobin

Canton

- ✓ Felicia Bryant
- **✓** Dianne Daley
- ✓ Lois Fritz Kathryn Hayes
- ✓ Caprice Hughes

Ypsilanti

- ✓ Alan Grajczyk
- ▼ Timothy Bowsher
 - ✓ Richard Rider

✓ Michael Tredway

Retired

- ✓ Mary Abbott
- ✓ Thelma Balogh Bela Rito ***
- Carl Belvees***
- Cary Black
- George Bolash
 John Bostek***
- ✓ Joe Golonka
- ✓ James Kelly
- William Lowe
- ✓ Joanna MacKinnon
- William Mason***
- William Mather
- John Meleski
- James Powell

Leo Rosol

Clarence Schukofsky***

- ✓ Gino Stellabuto
- ✓ Henry Strange
- ✓ Cathy Tondreau
- ✓ Cindy Trzeciak
- ✓ Margaret Zywicki
- ✓ Leonard Zawisa

Protect your job "Join COLCPE today!" Call 313-295-1640

- ✓ Check mark indicates you are signed up for automatic COLCPE contributions.
- *** Triple Asterisk Please contact the Union office. Our records indicates that your yearly check contribution has expired. Renew your commitment to the Committee On Letter Carriers Political Education (COLCPE).





Scholarships Winners

Dear Branch 2184,

Thank you so much for the scholarship opportunity your organization has offered me. I was both surprised and honored by it, and want to tell you how grateful I am for it.

I really appreciate the confidence and willingness or your group to contribute to my future education. I really love school here at The University of Toledo and am excited to continue my education here. At this time, I am still an undecided major, but am seriously considering going into speech language pathology to help people of all ages fix their speech problems from either birth or sickness.

Thank you again for your generosity!

(Signed)

Karen Grajczyk

(Daughter of Ypsilanti carrier Alan Grajczyk)

Dear Branch 2184,

With much appreciation I would like to thank President Mark Judd and the members of the NALC Branch 2184 for selecting me to be one of this years scholarship recipients.

This scholarship will enable me to take care of the additional expenses that always occur each year with the rise in tuition, as well as help cover the cost of books and living.

I would like to thank the members of Branch 2184 for their hard work everyday to be able to make this scholarship possible.

Very Respectfully,

(Signed)

Michael G. Cox

(Son of Dearborn Annex carrier Steve Cox)



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he Branch 2184 Officers and Stewards would like to extend to you and your families best wishes for a happy and joyous holiday season and a healthy, happy and prosperous new year.

May you enjoy all the blessings of peace and liberty, and the benefits of the special strength that flows from solidarity.



